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THE INSTRUCTIONAL ROLE OF THE
COLLEGE OF MINISTRIES

N. Afonin

The basic tasks of the collegia of ministries and departments are: studies of problems of practical supervision, reviews of completed work, selection of personnel, and examination of the orders of ministries. An important function of the collegia is the instruction of workers of central and local agencies, enterprises, and institutions.

The collegia should hold regular, carefully prepared sessions for discussions of the requirements of a given task, and for criticism and self-criticism with regard to the work performed. Such sessions would be educational for the industrial workers in attendance. In many cases, the instructional role is weakened because not all the ministries attach sufficient importance to these sessions.

An example of a decrease in effectiveness is the work of the collegium of the Ministry of Electric Power Plants. One of the most important questions to be taken up by the collegia is that of collaboration with workers' groups. A discussion of this question increases the worker's feeling of responsibility. However, the collegium of the Ministry of Electric Power Plants does not discuss such questions, and shirks its responsibility in the selection of workers. In one instance in 1947, among 206 workers listed for jobs in the Ministry of Electric Power Plants, only six cases were taken up at the session of the collegium.

The instructional value of the sessions of the Ministry of Power Plants is diminished by unsatisfactory preparation. An example of lack of preparation may be found in the session of 4 February 1948. In addition to the obvious neglect in the preparation of reports, it was clear that supervision of construction projects had been deficient; that orders from the Ministry had not been executed; and that Deputy Minister Drobyshev had not bothered to investigate working conditions. The sessions of this collegium are marked by a lack of criticism and of cooperative discussions of problems.

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In August 1947, Minister Zhimerin was appointed to correct mismanagement in the building of hydroelectric stations. His failure to discuss his findings in the collegium resulted in a loss of profitable instruction for other workers.

The shortcomings characteristic of the collegium of the Ministry of Electric Power Plants apply to other collegia. Attention must be given to the problems of better utilization of domestic reserves, mechanization, application of new techniques, reduction of costs, etc. Instructions to supervisory groups must stress thrift. The organization of collegia sessions on a higher plane will contribute greatly to the political growth and working efficiency of personnel.

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